

in tropical enclave economies that did not require much railroad construction for their success. The end point (the beginning of World War One as well as the almost coterminous beginning of the war between the factions during the Mexican Revolution) begs for more explanation. Although it may appear tedious to request additional material in a book that is already more than 600 pages long, readers might finish the book wondering what happened to the Germans when the revolution arrived in Yucatán with the troops of General Salvador Alvarado in 1915, followed by the interruption of German-Mexican trade relations with the U.S. entry into the world war in April 1917. A brief analysis would have made for a perfect epilogue, and a longer analysis might be a topic for a future volume. In any event, Alma Durán-Merk has written a detailed and useful book that should be required reading for specialists in European immigration into Latin America.

Jürgen Buchenau

UNC Charlotte

GEORGE F. FLAHERTY: *Hotel Mexico: Dwelling on the '68 Movement*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016

This is an ambitious book that seeks to reevaluate the experiential context of the 1968 Student Movement in Mexico City and its “afterlives” from the perspective of architecture, literature, artistic practices, and film. Flaherty moves, often effortlessly, between different temporal and interpretative modes, locating his narrative in 1950’s architectural discussions one moment and an evaluation of post-’68 remembering the next. What is especially impressive is his ability to integrate these different interpretative lenses into a wide-ranging, kaleidoscopic analysis of how key nodal points of the capital city were shaped, contested, and experienced across approximately six decades.

The title of the book serves as a metonym for Flaherty’s central thesis. In 1966 construction began on the Hotel de México, which was envisioned as “the country’s tallest, largest, and technologically most sophisticated property” (page 98). Its inauguration was originally planned to coincide with the start of the 1968 Olympiad, but this grandiose marvel of architectural design and technological innovation failed to be completed in time and ultimately fell short of the capital needed to finalize the project. Instead, it lay semi-finished and nearly abandoned for more than three decades until it was later transformed into a commercial trade center during the neo-liberal period in the 1990s. Only the Polyforum Cultural Siqueiros, originally conceived as an integral component of the hotel complex, would open in 1971. Flaherty builds outward from the planning of the Hotel de

México to explore the rich architectural and urban planning contexts that produced the utopian ambitions behind the project. At the same time, however, he uses the hotel as an operative metaphor to explore what he deems the “conditional hospitality” rendered by Mexico’s one party state; the nation’s denizens were, in Flaherty’s terms, “guest-citizens.” It is a creative metaphor, though one that Flaherty ultimately wears thin. This is due to repetition (the phrase “hospitality” is used more than 150 times in the book) but more so because he pushes the metaphor too far.

The book is divided into seven chapters with often evocative titles (e.g., “Revenge of Dust,” “Gestures of Hospitality,” “Satellites”), advancing laterally and chronologically at the same time. Each chapter, he explains, serves “as a vector in the spatial dimensions of the ’68 Movement and its afterlives” (page 19). Flaherty is at his best when unpacking the literary texts and artistic-intellectual currents that gave shape to, or later serve as a portal back into (e.g., “Dwellings”), the aspirations of national grandeur epitomized by the 1968 Olympiad and the social mobilizations of the student movement that erupted in response. He expertly links Mexican architectural movements with “high modernist” formulations and explores how, using the case study of the Nonoalco-Tlatelolco Housing Complex as one of several examples, the state’s urge to control and surveil was ultimately impeded by lived experience and improvisation. The defining historical conflict becomes that of the ’68 student movement, in which “*ganar la calle*” (winning the street) reflected, in Flaherty’s interpretation, not simply another slogan in the students’ rhetorical arsenal but a strategic objective in and of itself. The capture/transformation of the streets subverted “any government claims of urban authority or sovereign representation” (page 159). By inventing new modes of communication and forms of self-representation, student activists ruptured the authoritarian bargain of “conditional hospitality” and, in turn, transformed themselves—and by extension, their compatriots—from “guests” into “citizens.”

Flaherty’s rich interpretation of the period nicely jives with the recent historiographical emphasis on new forms of subjectivity that emerged in the Global Sixties. Especially satisfying are the ways in which he recovers semi-known as well as more iconic texts—ranging from the writings of Luis González de Alba and José Revueltas to films produced by the documentary collective CUEC and graphics of the 1968 Olympic Committee—and artfully unpacks their symbolism and rhetorical structures, all the while linking these texts to deeper national, regional, and global contexts. Less satisfying for this reader is Flaherty’s somewhat reductionist interpretation of Mexican politics. He becomes locked into his “Hotel Mexico” metaphor, which in turn serves as the epistemological explanation for how to interpret nearly every aspect of state governance during the period

of rapid modernization that came to define what is commonly referred to as the Mexican Miracle. This leads him to conclude, somewhat breezily in my opinion, that the numerous examples of impressive architectural achievements—ranging from the construction of the UNAM to the building of the metro—amounted to little more than “exaggerated and ultimately empty gesture[s] of the state’s magnanimity and enlightened stewardship” (page 197).

If at times Flaherty is a bit too insistent (or repetitive) in his deployment of his “hospitality” framework, this need not, however, overshadow the numerous instances of rich analysis and innovative historical reflection that *Hotel Mexico* otherwise contains. Urban historians will gain much insight from Flaherty’s eclectic methodological approach and keen aesthetic eye. *Hotel Mexico* is a noteworthy achievement that will quickly assume its place within the historiography of the Global Sixties.

Eric Zolov

Stony Brook University

ORI PREUSS: *Transnational South America: Experiences, Ideas, and Identities, 1860s-1900s*. New York and London: Routledge, 2016

In *Transnational South America: Experiences, Ideas, and Identities, 1860s-1900s*, Ori Preuss, a historian of Latin America at Tel Aviv University, traces the intensification of contacts between Latin American public intellectuals, particularly Brazilians and Argentines, during the latter half of the nineteenth century and into the first years of the twentieth. As Preuss notes, historiography on Latin American foreign relations has tended to focus on the “markedly unequal power relations” between Latin America and the “North Atlantic center,” rather than the complex, more horizontal interrelationships between Latin American nations that proliferated during this period (page 1). The tendency to view Latin America as occupying one side of a binary composed of what José Martí termed “our America” and the United States has particularly obscured the extent of Brazilian participation in nineteenth-century Latin American diplomacy and intellectual life, in part by reinforcing the idea that Latin America is an undifferentiated series of Spanish-speaking republics to which Brazil is necessarily an outlier. Across four chapters and a brief conclusion, Preuss forcefully argues for scholars to attend to the complex interactions between *letrados* from the River Plate’s twin powers, and debunks the myth of Brazilian non-participation in “the production of South American knowledge” (page 115).

In his first chapter, “‘Almost the Same Language’: Translation, International Relations, and Identification,” Preuss addresses how Argentine and Brazilian